

INTERRELATIONS

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sisters have been settled. On the other hand, the honour of the family which affects so intimately the prestige of the brothers, is largely in the keeping of the sister. Her honour is their honour. Later, through her marriage, she provides her brother with new affinal relationships of co-operation; he, in turn, is able to influence her husband to treat her well. Brother and sister are interdependent.

Since the female sex is subordinate to the male sex, the unmarried sister is always under the authority of her brothers. There are no conventional forms of respect between brother and sister but the latter obeys the instructions of an older or adult brother without debate. A brother watches over his sister's conduct and criticizes her freely when he thinks her public behaviour is unseemly. This disciplinary care begins at an early age. Ten-year-old Nausicaa was discovered one day by her young brother Charilaos, who is only six years old, when she was performing for my benefit a very comic imitation of how old men dance at weddings. Pink with the shame of it and with tears streaming down his face, he vainly tried to stop her mimicry.

After puberty, a certain formality enters into the relationship. Physical contact is avoided and there is little teasing. Conversation about family interests is easy and natural, but is more restrained in regard to personal matters. This is, no doubt, a conventional attitude which helps to maintain the neutral character of a relationship which exists between members of opposite sexes. But it seems also to be not inconsistent with the gravity of the categorical obligations which bind so closely a brother with his sister.

4. INTERRELATIONS

In all societies, the biological differentiae of sex and age provide criteria for the ordering of social relations in the family, although the emphasis on each factor and their mode of combination is peculiar to the particular society.

As one might expect, difference in age or generation is an equivocal criterion for the ordering of family roles in a community where the importance of competitive values is so pronounced. Persons of different sex have complementary functions and they do not compete. Naturally, difference of

192 THE FAMILY AS A CORPORATE GROUP

591 daughter which we have just described illustrates the strength
592 of this loyalty. This girl was a regular visitor to our hut. On the
593 first visit after her ordeal, some expression of sympathy was
made. The girl's composure was visibly upset, tears came to her
eyes and her lips trembled, but she would not discuss the inci-
dent and even refused to comprehend what we were talking
about. Whatever maltreatment the individual may receive in
the family, he remains loyal in the face of outsiders. And indeed
there is no alternative, for the individual cannot abandon or
change his family, or live outside its limits.

596 Secrecy about the family and its affairs is a measure of
157 loyalty and of the internal cohesion of the group. The Sarakat-
sani are, in fact, extremely secretive. As a matter of policy and
habit they never give accurate answers to questions about
numbers of sheep possessed or quantities of milk sold. The
answers to taxing authorities are diminished, and to other
persons, when the purpose is to impress, responses to the same
questions are inflated beyond credible limits. The marriage
aspirations and negotiations of sons and daughters are guarded
secrets. Information about private family life is denied to all
unrelated persons; and with reason, because people are always
seeking to find or fabricate incidents of intimate family life to
destroy the reputations of others. But secrecy goes beyond the
point of mere discretion and becomes an end in itself. A Sarakat-
sanos declines to give almost any personal information to a non-
kinsman, even where it could not remotely damage the family's
interests or prestige. One housewife will not disclose to another
what she is cooking for the evening meal. Two shepherds lead-
ing mules meet on a path and pause for ten minutes to deny
each other the simple pleasure of knowing where each has come
from, what he is carrying, and where he is going. The questions
are as pertinent as the answers are evasive. Children are drilled
into these attitudes from their early years. Asked by another
adult Sarakatsanos or villager who his father is, a child replies
with an air of false innocence, 'And you do not know me?'
Secrecy erects a barrier around the members of the family and
their intimate relations. The family secrets, whether they have
significant content or not, are relevant, simply because they
represent something which is denied to other people who
are not members of the group.

175 nomads with the widest range of migration. The
 221 sudden cage of new frontiers which sprang up
 131 after the Balkan Wars failed to confine them, and
 they would fan out in autumn, from Epirus and
 Macedonia, all over southern Albania and across
 the lower marches of Serbia as far as Montenegro
 and Herzegovina and Bosnia and into Bulgaria,
 to the foothills of the great Balkans.

Those Sarakatsani who thought of the Rhodope
 Mountains as their home were particularly bold
 in the extent of their winter wanderings. Not only
 would they expand northward, as they had in
 those first outposts which I saw years ago along the
 coasts of the Black Sea, but before the Hebrus
 River became the inviolable border of Turkey
 their autumnal caravans would reach Constanti-
 nople, and up would go their wigwams under the
 walls of Theodosius. Others would settle along
 the shores of the Sea of Marmara, looking out to-
 ward the islands of the Propontia. Yet others
 would spread over the rich green hills of the Dar-
 danelles, and many would cross the Hellespont
 and pitch their camps on the plain of Troy. The
 boldest of all would continue their journey to the
 meadows of Bithynia, wintering there among the
 poplar trees, or pushing on further into Cappado-
 cia as far as Caesarea, scattering their flocks
 across the volcanic wildernesses around the empty
 rock monasteries of Ürgü, or even as far as
 Iconium, the home of Jellalludin and the metropol-
 is of the whirling dervishes.

175 Enormous though these journeys were, they
 131 were scarcely looked upon as expatriation; for,
 221 until the mass deracination of the 1920s, much of
 101 Asia Minor was still part of the Greek world, and
 even beyond its confines, ancient Greek colonies,
 established for thousands of years but reduced by
 the later tide of invading Seldjuk Turks to scat-
 tered islets of Hellenism, still survived and pros-
 pered. There the invisible frontiers of nomadism
 overlapped and dovetailed into those of other
 pastoral wanderers, the Yourouks, autochthonous
 Anatolian shepherds who had grazed their flocks
 over the hinterland of Asia Minor for centuries be-
 fore the Turks arrived there and even made return
 migrations, now and then, as far as Macedonia.
 No wonder some of the aura of a fable hangs
 about these men.

- 123 So strong is this aura for me that a quarter
 of an hour after catching a glimpse of this iso-
 lated Sarakatsani I was sitting at the table next to
 him, among the smithies and harness makers, on
 the outskirts of the town where old artisans set-
 tled down to quiet nargilehs after quitting work.
 I watched him order and drink a coffee, and

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● 123 pondered how I could get into conversation. Soon, with a clap of horny hands, he was summoning the *kafedji* and preparing to depart. The *kafedji* arrived laden with an armload of elaborate gear, and a boy followed leading a horse. The Sarakatsani mounted and laid his crook across his lap. The *kafedji* handed him two six-foot-tall candles, adorned with ribbons and fluttering white satin bows. Then followed all the frivolous-looking white baubles which, as I know to my cost, a *kaumboros* — the groomsmen, sponsor, or best man — must contribute to the crowning of a groom and his bride at an Orthodox wedding. There were smaller candles, lengths of cloth in brown paper, parcels of sweets, and finally, the box containing the tinsel wedding crowns themselves. Suddenly my luck changed; as he moved off, a muslin bag of sugared almonds slipped and fell into the dust. I dived for it, ran after him, and, my luck still holding, remembered as I handed it over to utter the ritual phrase of a wedding guest to a *kaumboros*: "*Asi oi tou misthou sou!*" ("May they be worthy of your hire!") He reined in, and placing his right hand over his heart, bowed his head in a ceremonious gesture of thanks. Then, after an up-and-down glance and a pause, he asked, in a queer rustic accent, what place I was from. When I had told him, I asked him where the wedding was to be. "Tomorrow at Sikaraya," he said, "two hours from here." After another pause, he said, "Honor us by coming." He repeated his graceful bow, and bristling with his crook and his candles and aflutter with satin ribbons, clattered off.

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THE carriage that bore us along a narrow-gauge track next day seemed as obsolete as an equipage in a museum. It was high and narrow, the coachwork was painted to mimic the graining of yellowwood, and the upholstery was threadbare tasseled velvet. This delightful carriage, fit for two travelers out of Jules Verne, carried us swaying through the Thracian sky at an abnormal height. The gorges and forests of plane trees, the rocky river beds, and even the scrub-mantled mountainsides seemed far below. Every so often we passed solitary police posts and lookout platforms on stilts, each one a pedestal for an armed and helmeted soldier; reminders of the nearness, and of the danger, of the Bulgarian frontier. Asprawl among the trees and bracken, blown there by guerrilla mines, the rusty remains of carriages were gloomy mementos of the civil war. The country shook in the noonday.

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A jovial unshaven face appeared outside the moving windows, as though its owner were flying alongside. It was the ticket collector. When he

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585 fustanella and tights, and, disappointingly, pointed
292 black towny shoes. His face, rather a common-
place one for a Sarakatsán, was a mask of con-
fused virile seriousness. In only one thing did his
[531] outfit differ from the full-dress Greek mountain
costume: black woolen armlets, embroidered with
specifically Sarakatsán geometric zigzags, en-
cased his forearms below the wide white sleeves
which ended at his elbow.

585 Despite the chaos in the church, the marriage
service evolved unperturbed. The two enor-
mous ribboned candles were held by minute
shepherd boys, like the lances of heraldic sup-
porters, on either side of a little altar in the body
of the nave. The *koumbaras* switched the flimsy
white flower crowns from head to head in a suc-
cession of intricate passes and arranged and re-
arranged their hands and bound them with ribbon
and performed yet more complex manipulations
with the ring, and followed them in kissing the
bossy silver binding of the proffered misal. Fi-
nally he accompanied them, hand in hand, led by
the priest under a fusillade of flung rice and
sweets, in a slow and dignified dance thrice around
the altar. This is a kind of hieratic pavane, which
more than any other moment in the solemnization
(for the wine that the priest offers to the bridal
couple is no more than a commemoration of the
wedding at Cana of Galilee) hallows and confirms
the sacrament.

OUT in the sunlight, all was levity, flourished
banners, and gunfire again. We made our way
through the wigwams to the house which the
groom's father, striking modern roots in his win-
ter pastures, had recently built. As the newly wed
couple reached the threshold, someone handed the
groom a sieve, which he threw over his shoulder,
a measure which is said to forfend marital discord.

They both kissed the hand of the groom's father
and laid it to their foreheads for a second and
[123] vanished indoors. My new friend of yesterday,
[574] Barba Petro, introduced us to this pastoral dynast,
who welcomed us with the same graceful inclina-
tion, with his hand laid on his breast, and led us in.

[252] There were already plenty of guests there, both
on the low divan which ran around the room and
[539] cross-legged on the mats which padded the floor;
and at each new arrival, while black-swathed
aunts and grandmothers offered the newcomers
saucers with a spoonful of jam, a glass of water,
and a thimbleful of raki, they intoned a welcoming
song: "Mother, our friends have come," they
sang, "our bidden guests. Bid them welcome with
[576] honey and sugar and with golden words." Some
sat with hands linked around their doubled-up

585 The Sarakatsani, usually so silent in the
 521 presence of men, look forward to weddings as
 831 their only chances of fun. The talk takes a turn
 [562] of hair-raising bawdiness. None of the exciting,
 comic, or absurd aspects of sex are left unexploited.
 Rhymes, anecdotes, and reminiscences are eagerly repeated and capped, crone mumbles
 toothlessly to crone, bantering wives make humorously
 boastful and teasing comparisons about their married lives,
 girls listen wide-eyed and agog.
 [152] Fits of laughter punctuate this scandalous chat,
 hands are flung in the air in hilarity, faces are covered in mock shame.
 All this goes on out of male earshot, while at a distance their husbands
 and fathers and descendants smile indulgently at this seasonable ribaldry.

585 NIGHTFALL had transformed the scene indoors.
 123 Late arrivals and a few indefatigable ones were
 [254] still at meat; but the rest, lit now by scattered oil
 dips, had lapsed into a semitrance of wine and song.
 Our return with Uncle Petro evoked hospitable cries of greeting and invitation, repeated
 many times and driven home by a clashing of wine
 tumblers, to stay the night, as it was so late; or for
 a week, a month, or a year, or forever, to forget
 London and take to the huts. Alas, some tiresome
 fixture in Alexandroupolis next morning compelled
 us to leave, so, after manifold farewells, we climbed
 the stairs to pay our respects to the bride in
 her hushed upper chamber.

The rushlight on a stool cast so dim a light that the group at the end was hard to discern. One of the seated bridesmaids, mown down by her vigil, was fast asleep where she sat; a nudge from her neighbor shook her blinking into line. None of the other tiring women had moved, and the bride had remained frozen for the hours since we had last seen her in the same posture of submission. The faint radiance seemed to have robbed them all of a dimension. Darkly haloed by their own interlocking shadows, they merged with the wall, their black and white figures assuming the aspect of a half-lit fresco, with here and there an earring, a coin, a bracelet, a ring, or a necklace glittering momentarily and dimming again, as the wick rose or fell, like fragments of gilt or isolated gold tesserae in a mosaic. The bride silently bowed in answer to our farewells, miraculously moving among her still hagiographic troop of virgins and martyrs. We tiptoed out.

"Doesn't she ever speak?" I asked Uncle Petro when we were out of doors.

"Not now," he said.

"It's rather sad, during her own wedding."

"Ah! That's the way it is. That's how it should be."

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585 By the light of the fires among the huts, the scene out of doors was assuming a Brueghelish aspect. The dancers were still sedately moving in silhouette, a last spitted lamb was turning over a bed of glowing charcoal, and groups of nomads were staggering about arm in arm, filling the night with cries and laughter. Overcome by wine or exhaustion, a few of them lay fast asleep under the branches in disjointed attitudes, as though snipers had laid them low in mid-career. A heroic but unsteady figure, egged on by his companions, was draining, with head and trunk flung back, the last dregs from an immense wicker-cradled demijohn. Empty, it fell to the ground with a thud and rolled away amid cheers. A flaxen-haired boy, bent double against a tree trunk, vomited the day's intake in a somber gush. Chewing and snarling sheep dogs wrangled over bones. (354) The huts, vague globes looming out of the night, were now softly lit from within by the glimmer of oil dips and hearths. Deeper still in the darkness, one divined the presence of tethered horses. The singing grew fainter as we reached the railway line.

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198 "You should have seen the weddings when I was a boy," Barba Petro was saying, as the serpent of lighted train windows grew larger down the valley. "We used to set out on horseback a hundred strong to carry off the bride, firing off our guns as fast as we could load them. *Dang! Dang! Boom! Boom! Dang!* Horses used to be lamed, people wounded, sometimes people actually got killed. Whereas now —"

● 123 The train had clanked to a standstill beside us. We were aloft once more among the anachronistic fringes and tassels of our Victorian carriage.

"Come to see us up in the mountains, up in the Rhodope!" he shouted as the train began to move. "The plains are no good." He pointed with his crook into the night. "Up in the Rhodope —"

The wheels drowned the rest. The light from the carriage windows flashed down across his dwindling figure at quicker intervals, and the glimmering huts and the fires and the tiny moving silhouettes behind him looked as strange now and as alien to Europe as a nomadic encampment in the steppes of central Asia.

114 WHAT I could not know about these extraordinary people at the time of my visit to Sikarayia, I learned two years ago, when Mrs. Angelica Hadjimichalis' two quarto volumes, *I Sarakatsani*, appeared. A long lifetime of devotion and study, a great knowledge of the Greek past and Greek art history, and many decades of research and field-work among the Sarakatsani themselves have been

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steel scabbards clinking against their spurs; and then pounded off over the plain toward the hills and the far-sounding goat bells.

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WHEN, suddenly, at the heart of a deafening whirlpool of half-wild dogs, I drew rein at the camp toward sunset, it turned out to be a *stani* of about fifty huts scattered among the trees around a spring. The whole place was alive with golden evening dust and bleating and barking and bells. The ewes and the she-goats, followed by their shrill young, were being driven with crooks and shouts and ear-sundering whistles and the heckling of dogs into a great semicircular pen of wicker and woven thorns and thatch on a steep slope. Once inside, they were herded toward a narrow lych-gate at one end of it, where they were seized by their horns, their tails, or their hind legs, clamped back to front between a shepherd's knees, and milked under protest, a few deft seconds for each captive, into bronze caldrons. Despite my brief acquaintance with Greece, I knew that strange arrivals in country places unloose a friendly hubbub of curiosity and inquisition. Not so here. The aloof drovers doubled the diligence of their tasks; their shouts became louder, the milking more urgent. For the first time, I saw these Biblical men at close range; their black cloaks and their hoods gave them the look of Benedictines who had gone native. There were glimpses, too, of the amazing magpie geometry of the women rising from their dim looms and appearing for a moment in the threshold of the smoke-plumed cones. An authoritative old man with a sweeping mustache and an elaborate crook finally silenced the dogs and asked me what I wanted. I could understand little of what he said; I had spent the two previous months, my first in Greece, in snowy Mount Athos, trying to convert my imperfect ancient Greek into the rudiments of the modern, and the Sarakatsani dialect was a further barrier. When they had gathered that, in spite of patched breeches and puttees, I was not a soldier — no sword or gun! — in fact, a foreigner from England, alone, and too young and as yet unpredatory-looking to be capable of much harm, their reserve began to thaw.

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What was going on? They pointed down at the army glinting across the plain below through its long cocoon of dust, and the blast of a trumpet came softly to our ears. What had all that noise been about, over by the Struma? *Bam-boum-boum? Rat-tat-tat-tat? N'tang n'tang?* I gleaned with surprise from their half-understood questions that they had only the roughest notion of what was afoot. They knew that there had been a *kinema* —

[p.86-A]

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 123 a movement or revolution — but little more. (It
 669 occurs to me now that they may have been prudently waiting to see what sort of bird I was; what tobacco I smoked, as the phrase goes.) It seemed hardly credible that they were unapprised of events which had taken place so few miles away and had split the whole of Greece in two. Anyway, eagerly or ironically, they listened to my stumbling, gesticulating, half ancient and half modern, onomatopoeia-laced pantomime of the tidings: the revolt of half the armed forces in favor of Venizelos, the bombardments in Athens and Attica, the advance of the government forces through Salonika to the Struma River, the battle at the bridge, how the mutinous battleship *Averoff* had sailed away to Crete, how Venizelos himself had fled, probably to Cyprus, while the Macedonian leaders were retreating to Thrace, and perhaps into Bulgaria. A score of hooded nomads had gathered around me, leaning on their crooks and clicking their tongues deprecatingly at the right moments.

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 123 When I finished I noticed that their weather-beaten faces, possibly because of amusement at the odd idiom in which this communiqué had been delivered, had lost their sternness; the blue-gray eyes of the beetling despot who had first spoken had assumed a paternal look. "*Eh, paidi, mou,*" he said, with a cheerful expression that clashed with his words, "*kakos einai o polemos.*" ("War's a bad thing, my child.") Then, over his shoulder, he said to the others, "The boy must be hungry." I clambered down, a fair-haired boy took my horse, and another the saddlebags and the saddle and a bag of oats, and we headed through the dusk for the huts.

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 [262] **B**y THE time we had finished the hot milk with
 [263] black bread broken into it, and sprinkled with hammered salt — their only food it seemed, which we all spooned in unison out of the same dish — about forty shepherds were eagerly settled, unshod and cross-legged on the spread blankets, nursing their crooks around a fire of thorns in the center of a great domed hut. Half a dozen dogs lay panting in the dark doorway. The old man was forever pushing, with oak-apple-jointed fingers, a minute saucepan into the embers, and we hissed and gulped in turn over the same small cup of scalding and bubbling coffee. Another shepherd was busy slicing up handfuls of tobacco leaves on a log with a long knife, then rolling them and politely offering the rough cylinders for the smoker to lick shut and light with a twig. The day's halting saga, the oddity of its language evoking friendly laughter from time to time, was demanded all over again and discussed for hours.

000 There seemed to be hardly a thing in the hut

[p.86-B]

353 have seemed to be hardly a thing in the hut
 32 that could single out our surroundings for any particular date in the last few millennia, and almost nothing the nomads had not made themselves; either hanging from the lopped and fire-darkened stumps of branches jutting from the hut's timbers, neatly piled against the brushwood walls, or underfoot — guns, tools, choppers, adzes, spades, billhooks, cooking pots, saddles, harness, the tin frills around the icons, and among a pendant grove of dried and shaggy waterskins, a gleaming branchful of new horseshoes. Otherwise, all was hewn and carved wood or homespun from the backs of their flocks. Aloft, among the sooty twigs and the cobwebs, hung strings of onions, garlic, corncobs, and tobacco leaves. Higher still, the osier-bound reeds of the thatch all converged symmetrically in the apex of the dome. An agreeable and pungent aroma of milk, curds, sweat, goat's hair, tobacco, and woodsmoke filled the place. The thorns on the fire crackled nearly smokelessly, and whenever a new fagot was thrown on, the flames made the tall hut dance in a brief gold concavity above a mob of shadows and lit up the bleached and matted hair and those faces shaped by the blasts of winter and the summer solstice. Their features glittered and flashed like the surfaces on a flint, and whenever my eyes met any of theirs, a smile of welcoming friendliness would answer back.

I had begun to grasp, in the past few weeks, one of the great and uncovenanted delights of Greece; in my case, it was a pre-coming-of-age present. This is a direct and immediate link, friendly and equal on either side, between human beings; something that cuts through barriers of hierarchy and background and money and, except for a few tribal and historic feuds, through politics and nationality as well. It is not a thing that functions in the teeth of convention, but in almost prelapsarian unawareness of its existence. Self-consciousness and awe and condescension (and their baleful remedy of forced egalitarianism) and the feudal hangover and the post-Fall-of-the-Bastille flicker — all the gloomy factors that lame and hobble and limit the range of life and deoxygenate the air of western Europe are absent. Existence, these glances say, is a torment, an enemy, an adventure, and a joke that we are in league to undergo, outwit, exploit, and

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- 123 enjoy on equal terms as accomplices, fellow hedonists and fellow victims. It is exciting for a stranger when he begins to understand that the armor which has been irking him and the arsenal he has been lugging about for half a lifetime are no longer needed. A feeling of miraculous lightness takes their place. On that particular evening this exhilaration was reinforced by other things; my mind was full of the events of the day, the smell of gunpowder, the cannon fire at dawn which had achieved the innocence of fireworks as the bangs had echoed upstream — the first glimpse, in fact, of warfare. By then, I felt I had almost taken part in the battle. The hooves hammering over the loose planks of the bridge still rang in my ears, and the songs on the long ride. On top of this came the beautiful ascent through the foothills, the sunset arrival at the encampment, and now, the voices and laughter and the gold fire-lit masks of the nomads in this hut in the dark mountains, the tiredness of limb, the feeling of being blessedly lost in time and geography with months and years hazily sparkling ahead in a vista of un conjecturable magic. The fusion of all this made it seem that life, at that moment, had nothing more to offer.

533 But it did have something more, and at once.
[123] Yorgo, the old man's grandson, who had taken my horse and me under his wing (planning to guide us next morning on a shortcut over the hills to a point where we could swoop down on the army again), fished out a long bone flute. The music that began to hover through the hut was moving and breathless. It started with long and deep notes separated by pauses and then shot aloft in pro-

[Text continues on p. 88-A]

[p. 87-B]

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123 The pages which follow show the research that we carried on
124 "in the field" and on the basis of the existing published data. In
126 the field we practiced both the extensive and the intensive methods,
depending on the situation and the local possibilities. Techniques
chiefly used were: direct observation, recording of accounts and
narratives, interviews, and finally direct participation in Sarakatsani
life.

124 As informants we chose and questioned more than one hundred persons
of both sexes and all ages, whose social positions were as diverse as
possible.

114 The map on p. 5 shows the geographic points at which we centered
128 our enquiry. In addition, the reader will find in this work a certain
number of plates and drawings which illustrate our subject and complete
our descriptions.

113 As far as bibliography is concerned we must state that no work of
analysis on this subject exists and there are only a small number of
ethnographic studies, which are listed and evaluated in the pages that
follow:

--Carsten Høeg: Les Sarakatsans, une tribu nomade grecque

This book, bearing chiefly on the study of the Sarakatsani idiom
contains an ethnographic note which, in our opinion, is a good intro-
duction for the reader. However, it is only an introduction and is
therefore limited.

Nevertheless, the linguistic part is very interesting and its
conclusions continue to remain valid.

In the second volume of this work Monsieur Høeg reproduces some
Sarakatsani stories and songs in a compilation very useful to the
investigator.

/12/ --D. Géorgakas: De l'origine des Sarakatsan et de leur
dénomination (in Greek). A very learned study which presents an excel-
lent systematic and critical account of all the theories concerning the
origin of the Sarakatsani. It also contains some well documented ethnolog-
ical data. However, since this study is very specialized it remains limited.

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000 kindly accept here the expression of our thanks.

128 We wish to thank also our colleague, Madame Y. Roux, whose help in the revision of our text has been particularly valuable.

000 Finally, I wish to recall my debt to my wife to whom this work, like all the others, owes so much.

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PART ONE

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Dialogue With Nature

121 Placing man in relation to nature, in the Aristotelian sense of

"*épistémè*" releases a whole world of reciprocal actions and reactions. Multiple phenomena appear which make up, on the one hand, the demographic and ecological base of the entire society and the entire culture, and, on the other hand, that which A. Leroi-Gourhan calls "a layer of objects that constitute the trappings of men", (1)

1. *Milieu et techniques*, p. 361.

in other words, the technology. All these phenomena originate, as the same author expresses it, "at the point of contact between the exterior environment (the environment pure and simple) and the interior environment". (2)

2. *Ibid.*, p. 361.

that is to say, "an extremely complex solution of mental traditions." (3)

3. *Ibid.*, p. 354.

128 This first part will deal with these phenomena: We shall see the Sarakatsani version of this relationship, the way in which our herders manage to converse with nature.

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Chapter I

The Demographic and Ecological Substratum of
Sarakatsani Society and Culture

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114 One can only regret that a complete analysis of the Sarakatsani demographic phenomena is not possible for lack of statistical data.

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123 It is nevertheless possible to reconstruct some of these by relying
124 on the statements of our informants, on our personal observations, on
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123 /17 cont./
124 published data. (1)
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1. Madame Hadjimichali: Ibid., p.
and on information furnished by the Services of the Hellenic State.

Thus, there is evidence that:

163 --The birth rate is very high among the Sarakatsani. Their
families are very large, and the number of children that play around the
858 huts is considerable. "It is the children that make up true wealth,"
842 the Sarakatsani say; they also maintain that number of boys is of
562 greater importance to them than the number of girls. This statement is
based on the fact that children of the female sex are not preferred and
it is what they all believe, but it--is false. If it were true, the
[582] Sarakatsani would have difficulty marrying, since they practice endogamy;
as a general rule they marry only Sarakatsani.

162 Now, there is no shortage of girls to marry in spite of information
[582] to the contrary furnished by B. Skafidas. (2)
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2. OI Sarakatsanaioi, p. 362.
[125] In taking a census of married women within the limits of two large
[178] Sarakatsani groups (at Tchoucalades very near Mt. Parnassus, and at Plaka
near Lamia) who, significantly enough, were in the process of transition
towards the sedentary life, we had occasion to /18/ confirm that non-
Sarakatsani women represented a minute proportion (about 1.5%).

165 --Mortality is apparently low. It is the common belief among the
Sarakatsani as well as among the peasants surrounding them that longevity
is the rule among them.

This belief seems justified. The local health services of the Hellenic
state, established in different localities visited by Sarakatsani, told
us that mortality really is very low. Moreover, a visit to the Sarakatsani
cemetery at Tchoucalades gave us the opportunity to ascertain that the
average age of the deceased inscribed on the tombstones exceeded 70 years.

[217] Obviously, since there are no civil state registers among them (3)
one may question whether these figures are very accurate.

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22. During one phase of our inquiry, one of our /female/ collaborators who accompanied us in order to ask the women questions, had the idea of inviting the women of the family to take part in the meal which was offered us in the family hut. The reaction was immediate and very intense. The embarrassment of all was manifest, conversation ceased and the silence was heavy. Finally, the women declared that they had already eaten, and the atmosphere regained its normal character of cordiality and hospitality.

56 that of the girls one can observe a hierarchy: the older ones assert
594 themselves over the younger ones, and the younger ones obey the older
[593] ones. We may say that the older brother or sister is invested with
authority over the younger brother or sister, which reproduces on a
smaller scale that of the father or the mother.

593 On the economic plane, it is the father who owns all the family
421 possessions of which he is absolute master and manager. The wife has
594 no right over these possessions. For the children the situation is
different and varies according to circumstances. The under-age boys and
the girls, no matter what their age, can demand none of the paternal
fortune.

However, once they are adult, the sons may demand their patrimony
from their father during his lifetime if they wish to marry and establish
themselves elsewhere. But that happens very rarely.

The girls, for their part, may demand from their father the means
that will enable them to prepare their trousseau in preparation for
their marriage.

593 The father is likewise expected to provide his family with the
594 means of subsistence, food, clothing, indispensable services, etc,
[562] Here again, the subordination to the father and the privileged

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128 as he too plots his course in the half-light of his conscience, reacts in the presence of the unknown, the mysterious, the marvelous in the cosmic and human universe, through action (magic), contemplation both rational and affective (knowledge, myth, religion), strong emotion harmoniously ordered (esthetics). We shall thus proceed in broad outlines, though the order followed in our analysis will not be exactly the same. No matter. Our goal this time is to come near to the Sarakatsani soul. We shall seek it out in the hope of reaching it through its external manifestations--through the works which it engenders and encompasses.

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CHAPTER I

SARAKATSANI MAGIC

The path to the study of magic is barred by numerous obstacles.

123 First the terminology. Our herders designate by the term "magic"
609 everything that pertains to black magic, the magic of charms and spells.
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754 For them white magic, curative, indissolubly connected with everyday life,
755 does not deserve this name.

Next, the curative ritual is hidden in the shadow of the secret and mysterious, for fear that its communication, especially to a stranger, would desecrate it and make all manipulation ineffective. Similarly, and all the more so, discussions about black magic are forbidden in order to avoid attracting the evil, the mere mention of which might provoke it.

In the third place, the beliefs and ideas underlying the practices are inaccessible. They are either forgotten or purposely hidden or falsely formulated to confuse the investigator or give him a reply which "would please him."

123 All we can do is merely to record some scraps of information and con-
124 versations, to observe daily life, to make a list of actions, words, materials used and, as much as possible, to resort personally to magic cures. Then comes the effort to cross-check the information and observations,

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123 to try to systematize this incoherent material and submit these conclusions
124 to the verification of informants who have proved both the most reliable and the most accessible.

121 A methodological principle has been of great use to us during this work. The practices and beliefs of a coherent society must form an equally coherent whole, without internal contradictions. If, in reconstructing them, one does not succeed in integrating them into a system, one can be certain, or nearly so, that the approach followed has failed. One must then begin again /248/ from other hypotheses. Of course it is necessary to allow for deviations insofar as special reasons require.

Comparative ethnography and the history of religion of peoples in the Mediterranean basin have aided us very much. The result of our account will testify to this.

128 The present chapter is divided into three parts: the first deals with "The magical practices of the Sarakatsani and their historical and cultural origins." It focuses on the subjects to which the practices refer. The second is concerned with the analysis of "the magic thinking of the Sarakatsani." The third deals with the "social functions of Sarakatsani magic."

121 The keynote of this research is the effort to know fully the deepest layers of the soul and thought of our herders.

MAGICAL PRACTICES AND THEIR HISTORICAL AND CULTURAL ORIGINS

181 FERTILITY OF HUMANS AND ANIMALS.

In the universe of Sarakatsani social values there are two which, in view of the conditions of their existence, represent the foundations of their conception of material well-being. The first is crystallized in the following maxim: "True wealth means numerous offspring." The second is expressed in the general esteem for large flocks.

121 The practice dealing with this domain are multiple and correspond to
842 various aspects of procreation and gestation. It is appropriate to distinguish between acts aiming at the prevention of sterility and those which